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Delving into Music and Dance: *An Intricate Investigation*



Shannon Fahs
Senior Thesis
Loyola Marymount University
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Delving into Music and Dance: An Intricate Investigation

"The music is first. I couldn't move without a reason and the reason is music." ~George Balanchine

What would my college career's culmination be if not for dance and music's significant presence? While reflecting upon the past four years, I have determined that these two arts elicit a phenomenon in need of further exploration. As a dance major, I experience the power of dance and its relation to music on a daily basis. The famed composer Aaron Copland recognizes such an experience when he remarks, "...the sound element in music is a powerful and mysterious agent, which it would be foolish to deride or belittle."¹ If it is foolish to belittle the element, then I seek to acknowledge it; and further than that, I seek to make new discoveries. The fact that I will be graduating as a dance major is due in large part to dance's relationship to music. I therefore see no better time than now to delve into this relationship. What is it about these arts that we humans find so stirring? Why are we invigorated by a dance or moved by a musical piece? What causes that jolt in our chest when either work captures a moment just right? While there can be no one right answer to these questions, I still feel the need to uncover the possible ones. I am ultimately seeking to find out how music evokes a transcendent or passionate response in people, and how that is especially evident in dance.

For me, life began with music. Music came first. I did not discover the wonder of movement until I realized that my voice needed an outlet. Once I started to sing, I found that standing still was not an option. I was very young and I felt incomplete if I sang or listened to a song consistently without having movement to go with it. Music led me to dance, therefore music is responsible for introducing me to the art that I now consider to be my life's focus. By age eight I knew that the two arts would forever be a substantial

¹ Aaron Copland, *What to Listen for in Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1957), 10.

part of my existence. Any strong emotion I had, whether it was a positive or a negative one, had to be satisfied through dance or music. I could not do one without being inclined to do the other. They were always somehow intertwined. Dance grew out of music and music stimulated dance. My experiences and my training have brought me to the conclusion that music and dance are necessarily connected. They are individual arts with individual purposes, but they complement one another in an unusually powerful way. Their relationship is extremely complex. It can be analyzed from as many viewpoints as there are artists, and that is exactly what I intend to do.

Music, dance, passionate, transcendent -- these are all words that will play a substantial role in my exploration. We understand them to some degree, but to define them proves more difficult. I return to the basics, definitions in the dictionary, to find how one might officially refer to these terms. According to *The Little Oxford Dictionary*, music is "art of combining vocal or instrumental sounds in harmonious or expressive way." Dance can be a verb or a noun, the verb being more rhythmical and tied to music, and the noun referring to "dancing as art; style or form of this; lively motion." I often find that people have a difficulty describing dance in a satisfactory way, and it appears that the dictionary is no exception. Most dancers would not classify their work as lively motion, but then not many arts are able to be sufficiently boiled down into one sentence. I do find it interesting to note that dance's definition includes music. It appears that I am not the only person who finds the two to be inexplicably intertwined. Passionate seems to have the most straightforward definition of the four terms. Passionate is defined as being "dominated by, easily moved to, or showing passion" with passion described as "strong emotion; strong enthusiasm." Transcendent is the tricky one, mostly because the very quality of transcendence is elusive. Transcendence is not easily achieved or easily recognized. Nonetheless, the dictionary does a relatively complete job of referring to it as "excelling, surpassing; transcending human experience; existing apart from, or not subject to limitations of, material universe." Having definitions, however basic, is a good reference point when starting out in the complicated art world. At least they help us have common ground in discussing our arts. As we go along, those definitions will be expanded and redefined by the experts.

While working on this thesis I played an array of instrumentally charged music in the background. I cannot describe the effect, but the idea of transcendence did spring to mind. The world did not disappear -- in fact the issues seemed even more emphasized, but the atmosphere changed. My intensity in my work grew, and I felt like a more fully capable human being. I believe this kind of experience is similar to how one gains inspiration from music when dancing. If the music is right, it accentuates the dancing. My thesis is about the kinesthetic and the emotional. It deals with the technical correlation between music and dance, as well as the passionate response they each provoke. I illustrate why dancers should study music in conjunction with their physical training. I explore the transcendent experience which takes place when music and dance create something exceptionally profound. I approach the experience from the performer's, the choreographer's, the composer's, and the audience's perspective. Although I am equally attached to music *and* dance, many professionals are versed in one and not the other. I lend a portion of my time to acknowledging these artists in addition to those who are proficient in both. My aim is to be both methodical and intuitive, because being a dance major has taught me that the academic perspective is as necessary as passion for an artist.

The Kinesthetic and the Emotional in Music and Dance

We are not affected by art completely by chance. Artists have a job to do and that job is to create a certain sensation. In regard to music, Copland states, "Contemporary music, especially...is meant to stir you and excite you, to move you -- it may even exhaust you."² So it should come as no surprise that it often accomplishes its task. The question then would be why or how does it do that? When a composer composes or a choreographer choreographs, "He gives us himself...He gives us, without relation to exterior 'events,' the quintessential part of himself -- that part which embodies the fullest and deepest expression of himself as a man and of his experience as a fellow being."³

² Copland, 249.

³ Copland, 265.

The work need not be a story or a reflection of a specific situation because art is personal and inevitably gives one away. We develop a connection, especially if we identify with the characteristic being expressed. An answer such as this proves agreeable because it makes sense. If one can empathize with the artist then one is opened up to being affected by the work. Yet just when I deem Copland's words sufficient, Albert Blackwell finds a discrepancy with the solution. He uses Mozart as an example of someone who refrained from giving himself away in his art:

Mozart's music is not, in contrast to that of Bach, a message, and not, in contrast to that of Beethoven, a personal confession. He does not reveal in his music any doctrine and certainly not himself...Mozart does not wish to *say* anything: he just sings and sounds. Thus he does not force anything on the listener, does not demand that he make any decisions or take any positions; he simply leaves him free.⁴

Blackwell's assertion disrupts Copland's solution, and quite profoundly, because Mozart is a major player in music -- he is too important to ignore. Thus we realize that music's effect cannot be entirely summed up as being a result of the artist revealing himself.

Now comes the time to incorporate dance in the discussion. To respond to a dance piece that is accompanied by music, the music and the dancing must be coordinated. Once they are put together, one cannot thrive if the other is lacking. The dancers must possess musicality for music to benefit a dance piece. Musicality demonstrates itself when a dancer understands the music and moves with the music proficiently. "This quality seems to be something that emanates from every muscle of the dancer's body."⁵ George Dorris describes musicality as, "...a way of shaping a role or a ballet so that it seems to interact with the music, each supporting the other, until dance, dancer, and music become one."⁶ He further recognizes that musicality "...can influence one's emotional reaction..." to dance.⁷ When a dancer neglects the music, the performance feels disjointed. Likewise, the performance's power increases when music

⁴ Albert L. Blackwell, *The Sacred in Music* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 151.

⁵ Katherine Teck, *Ear Training for the Body* (Pennington: Princeton Book Company, Publishers, 1994), 3.

⁶ Teck, 4.

⁷ Teck, 4.

is used accurately. Musical intelligence is integral to being a skilled mover. This is true for dances performed in silence as well. While "...movement can be a complete expressive art in itself...The quality of musicality can be present even when there is an absence of either regular measured pulsation or music itself."⁸ Acknowledged earlier was the fact that there is no all inclusive answer as to how music provokes an emotional response. Nevertheless, we now know that musicality plays a role in how the two together trigger such a reaction. Perhaps dancers possessing musicality are compelling because attaining the skill is not easy. Knowing how to count music and coming in on the beat is an important first step to becoming musically inclined, however Dorris stresses that musicality requires more components than that:

The dancer who always comes in on the beat is not necessarily musical, nor even the choreographer who always starts the dance phrase with the musical phrase. The former may be merely correct and the latter merely academic. The truly musical dancer and choreographer can use rhythm and phrasing far more subtly than that. Such musicality is not a simple matter of "feeling the music," either, for no one can know whether someone else is "feeling" or not...The ability to make visible one's understanding of the music is an even rarer quality than having such understanding.⁹

Essentially "there are many ways in which movement and music can relate," and their relationship is not solely dependent on beat or tempo.¹⁰

Dance and music are related on a fundamental level: "To dance artists, the instrument of choreographers is the human body...For dancers, making music by means of body percussion has the added attraction that sounds are produced by physical motions -- mostly of the fingers, hands, and feet."¹¹ These aspects emphasize the importance of having musical training coincide with dance training. Rosemary Dunleavy, a Ballet Mistress at New York City Ballet, finds music beneficial to the learning process: "Music is the key. It's the music that gives me the memory of the steps. When I hear the music, I see the ballet and feel the ballet. That's how it works for me. It's the music and its

⁸ Teck, 4.

⁹ Teck, 4.

¹⁰ Teck, 5.

¹¹ Teck, 12.

rhythms that make me remember the steps.”¹²

Jennifer Muller is another advocate for music as a benefit to dance. While some modern artists insist upon warming up in silence to stress the independence of dance, Muller, when working with her company The Works, rejects the notion:

There is no energy in silence. A dance class has many aims, but there are two basic aims. One is to warm up all the systems of the body. That doesn't mean just physically; it includes one's emotional center, physical center, spiritual center. The other thing is that you are constantly improving your technique. A class goes from quiet to most difficult as the body gets warmed up.¹³

Muller's reference to the body's emotional and spiritual centers reflects the idea of transcendence. Awakening these centers is the first step towards going beyond the physically focused realm dancers operate in during class. Music motivates movers to access their emotional side in addition to their technique. The musical addition can be risky, however, if used improperly. Music should never drown out the dancing; music enhances the movement.

Musicality is a tricky issue in need of more investigation. As Muller puts it, “You have to be *with* the music. Not follow the music, but be with the music, be part of the music. It's a different depth of understanding. Certainly you can dance on top of the music. That's something different. But if you are going to be a part of the music, you have to be inside it, so it's not something that is there just playing in the distance.”¹⁴ Skilled dancers should also be able to distinguish meter and determine which meter is appropriate for a given exercise; for instance a 4/4, 3/4, 6/8, or 12/8. Muller stresses, “Meter does have a definite effect, and it does change the physicality and energy of the body.”¹⁵ While Muller's comments depict her as a music enthusiast, she is not unfamiliar with dancing in silence. Her comments are based on the results of her experience as a choreographer and as a mover in multiple situations. She has also learned that one must

¹² Teck, 41.

¹³ Teck, 42.

¹⁴ Teck, 43.

¹⁵ Teck, 44.

never rely too heavily on the music:

...the majority of my dances are not counted at all. Movement is originated first by muscular rhythm: how long it takes to do a specific move...In the beginning years, I always choreographed to silence and added music later. It was very seldom that I started with the music. I always believed that if a dance couldn't stand on its own in silence, with its own internal phrasing and its own dynamic build, music wasn't going to help it...I always thought music was a crutch. Now, I still have certain beliefs in that, but I also have gone in the other direction, where what I call the molecules of music are the inspiration for the dance. But the dance is not just representative of the music, hitting certain beats or certain accents or instrumental riffs with the music. Instead, you are making an evocation of the musical form. You are *becoming* the music.¹⁶

That ability to become the music largely identifies an advanced dancer. The advanced or "professional" dancer flows naturally into the music. As Muller says, "When you are doing a physical move with your entire body, you know if it is just that bit faster or not. There is an amazing sense of tempo that performers develop if they are professional dancers."¹⁷

Musicality is an important quality because it is recognizable even to the untrained eye. A non-dancer may not realize that the performer has a poor sense of musicality, but his or her view will inevitably be affected. Perhaps the performance will not be as powerful as it could have been. Musicality is directly related to the potential for an emotional response. Developing a sense of musicality takes time, but awareness can accelerate the process: "Beyond tempo, dancers must become aware of the various ways in which their movement can relate to music."¹⁸ Muller agrees that dance should be taught in conjunction with musical training, as she received training in both at Julliard. When it comes to movement, Muller acknowledges that "a lot of it is inspired from music structure."¹⁹ The relationship between music and dance is important to keep in mind as I approach my inquiry from a philosophical standpoint.

¹⁶ Teck, 44.

¹⁷ Teck, 45.

¹⁸ Teck, 45.

¹⁹ Teck, 46.

Philosophizing About Art

I have been asking what it is that we respond to in music, or in dance for that matter. Jacques Maritain is a philosophical observer who presents the idea that we appreciate that which demonstrates the depths of human potential. He sees the arts as elevating the intellect. Maritain talks about creative intuition, which is born in the deepest depths of the intellect, and determines that "Art resides in the soul and is a certain perfection of the soul."²⁰ Maritain allows one to consider the fact that art can cause a transcendent response because the creation of it is spiritual. The need for the fine arts is the need to express thought. Art can be beautiful and intellectual and satisfying all at once:

The need is not extraneous to the intellect [in fine arts], it is one with the intellect. We have a demand for the participation, through the object created, in something which is itself spiritual in nature. For beauty...is radiant with intelligence and is a transcendent and infinite as the universe of the intellect. Thus the very end -- the transcendent end -- intended pertains to the realm of the intellect, of its exultation and joy...²¹

Art is especially beautiful, beautiful not in the conventional sense but in the aesthetically gratifying sense, because it is free. Art is free to interpretation. In the case of a dance or music piece, the freedom lies in the performance. The piece becomes something entirely new every time it is performed. As Maritain says, "...[the] end in itself [is] totally singular, absolutely unique...every time and for every single work, there is for the artist a new and unique way to strive after the end...the craftsmanship of the artist succeeds in engendering in beauty."²² According to Maritain, for a work to have a transcendental effect, the artist must be fully devoted to it. His or her experience in creating the work is directly related to how others will respond to it. A pleasing end does not happen by chance: "...such a spiritual and transcendental, self-sufficient, absolute, all-exacting end demands that the very self and subjectivity of the artist should be committed to it."²³ To

²⁰ Jacques Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry* (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1953), 48.

²¹ Maritain, 55.

²² Maritain, 58.

²³ Maritain, 58.

put it again more simply: "To produce in beauty the artist must be in love with beauty."²⁴

If I reflect upon art that affects me, it is usually not art that is perfect, but rather art that is human. When I can see the dancer's pulsating muscles, when I can practically hear the music's pain, that is what moves me. Creative intuition is born in the intellect, and the intellect is distinctly human as well. Individual thoughts are what make us human. Therefore, Maritain says, "If creative intuition is lacking, a work can be perfectly made, and it is nothing; the artist has nothing to say. If creative intuition is present, and passes, to some extent, into the work, the work exists and speaks to us, even if it is imperfectly made and proceeds from a man who has the habit of art and a hand that shakes."²⁵ There lies another reason why art can be deemed beautiful without being conventionally beautiful. When work is present in art, when the artist's journey is evident, it becomes beautiful. With this realization, my ultimate question receives another potential answer. An emotional response occurs once we see the effort manifested. If we happen to know the artist's background, our reaction is based on appreciating how far the work has come. Therefore, connection to the work also plays a large part in determining how we respond.

Philosophizing about art may initially seem odd, but it is not unusual. Susanne Langer points out why philosophy, a field of study seemingly opposite that of art, can contemplate art: "Art is not philosophical at all; philosophy and art are two different things. But there is nothing one cannot philosophize about -- that is, there is nothing that does not offer some philosophical problems. Art, in particular, presents hosts of them."²⁶ Answering why music and dance are effective is difficult because what they create is not concrete. What the listener hears and what the viewer sees is only there in the moment: "In watching a dance, you do not see what is physically before you -- people running around or twisting their bodies; what you see is a display of interacting forces...it is only visible, not tangible."²⁷ It is hard to describe even what it is that we see, much less

²⁴ Maritain, 58.

²⁵ Maritain, 60.

²⁶ Susanne K. Langer, *Problems of Art: Ten Philosophical Lectures* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), 1.

²⁷ Langer, 5.

distinguish what makes the dance beautiful. Langer resolves that "...the dynamic image created in dancing [is]...something charged with feeling. Yet this feeling is not necessarily what any or all of the dancers feel. It belongs to the dance itself."²⁸ Here we return to the idea that expression draws us into an art work. This time, however, the artist's personal expression is less the issue than the all encompassing theme of human feeling: "The important fact is that what language does not readily do -- present the nature and patterns of sensitive and emotional life -- is done by works of art. Such works are expressive forms, and what they express is the nature of human feeling."²⁹ That statement calls to mind the earlier determination that what moves us is that which is distinctly human.

Langer supports there being a relationship between music and dance because she emphasizes the point that all art is connected. She says, "Expressiveness, in one definite and appropriate sense, is the same in all art works of any kind. What is created is not the same in any two distinct arts -- that is, in fact, what makes them distinct -- but the principle of creation is the same."³⁰ Langer returns to human feeling to describe what that principle of creation is:

A work of art is an expressive form created for our perception through sense, or imagination, and what it expresses is human feeling. The word "feeling" must be taken here in its broadest sense, meaning *everything that can be felt*, from physical sensation, pain and comfort, excitement and repose, to the most complex emotions, intellectual tensions, or the steady feeling-tones of a conscious human life.³¹

Occasionally a music or dance piece seeks to express a distinct emotion. However, even those that do not, those that have no particular intention, end up expressing emotion itself. Some artists enjoy presenting a situation they themselves have never experienced, but that may resonate with others. Langer goes on to say, "An artist, then, expresses feeling...He formulates that elusive aspect of reality that is commonly taken to be amorphous and

²⁸ Langer, 6-7.

²⁹ Langer, 8.

³⁰ Langer, 14.

³¹ Langer, 15.

chaotic; that is, he objectifies the subjective realm. What he expresses is, therefore, not his own actual feelings, but what he knows about human feeling.” We can draw the conclusions that we respond to dance and music because the arts are naturally a reflection of human feeling and because sometimes the artists intend our responses. Mozart is one artist whose operas managed to incite a new sensation every time the musical tone changed. When discussing Mozart’s operas, Maynard Solomon points out the “power of the music” and notes that the music determines the atmosphere of every scene.³² In a case such as that, the artist knows exactly what he or she is hoping to instill.

Other times, the creative invention takes place but the art’s meaning is as abstract to the artist as it is to the audience. Copland tells us:

Certain composers, such as Stravinsky, refer to music as an object and avoid discussing it in terms of meaning. Heaven knows it is difficult enough to say precisely what it is that a piece of music means, to say it definitely, to say it finally so that everyone is satisfied with your explanation. But that should not lead one to the other extreme of denying to music the right to be “expressive”.³³

Mainstream audiences are known for vehemently searching for meaning in works of art. Copland cautions against this approach, as art is not founded on one concrete concept: “This whole problem can be stated quite simply by asking, ‘Is there a meaning to music?’ My answer to that would be ‘Yes.’ And ‘Can you state in so many words what the meaning is?’ My answer to that would be, ‘No.’ Therein lies the difficulty.”³⁴ Dance is much the same. In fact, dance pieces that are literal are hardly stirring. They are used as entertainment but they do not promote the transcendent response with which we are concerned. As Copland concludes, “You will soon realize that the more beautiful a theme seems to you the harder it is to find any word that will describe it to your complete satisfaction.”³⁵ Consequently, an artist who feels inspired, but who cannot pinpoint what they are being inspired by, need not worry. The work still possesses the ability to affect

³² Maynard Solomon, *Mozart: A Life* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1995), 505.

³³ Copland, 12.

³⁴ Copland, 12.

³⁵ Copland, 14.

those who experience it in the same inexplicable way that it affects the artist. After all, “Music expresses, at different moments, serenity or exuberance, regret or triumph, fury or delight. It expresses each of these moods, and many others, in a numberless variety of subtle shadings and differences. I may even express a state of meaning for which there exists no adequate word in any language.”³⁶

Many times our subconscious experiences that which our conscious mind does not recognize. Art has the ability to speak to the subconscious: “...the arts...give inward experience form and thus make them conceivable. The only way we can really envisage vital movement, the stirring and growth and passage of emotion, and ultimately the whole direct sense of human life, is in artistic terms.”³⁷ We respond to music and dance then partly because we are being satisfied. Our deepest feelings are somehow understood and appeased. In every day life we do not acknowledge many emotions we have built up inside. Therefore, it is a rarity when these emotions are fulfilled. A passionate response to art is powerful partly because it is not mundane. It is unusual, thus it is special. Part of what characterizes a transcendent moment is that it does not happen very often. Experiencing one is incredibly exhilarating.

As previously established, the combination of dance and music is capable of provoking that rare response. Langer calls to mind similarities between the two arts, claiming that they are both based on movement. However, “Musical movement is illusionary.”³⁸ So how exactly can music be considered movement? “Music flows; a melody moves; a succession of tones is heard as a progression. The differences between successive tones are steps, or jumps, or slides. Harmonies arise, and shift, and move to resolutions. A complete section of a sonata is quite naturally called a ‘movement.’”³⁹ Despite the correlation, Langer does not want us to be confused; dance and music are inherently different. Interestingly, by identifying those differences we are led to their similarities: “Music creates a purely audible time, dance a realm of interacting

³⁶ Copland, 13.

³⁷ Langer, 71.

³⁸ Langer, 37.

³⁹ Langer, 36.

powers...But if you trace the differences among the arts as far and as minutely as possible, there comes a point beyond which no more distinctions can be made.”⁴⁰ Dance and music are not two different views of the same thing. They have distinctions to be sure, but they are related at their core because they are art. “...They exemplify the general principles of Art...All art is the creation of perceptible forms expressive of human feeling.”⁴¹ The issue of human feeling shows up over and over again. It is an important concept to drill in because of the fact that it distinguishes art from everything else. Creation in art means taking that which does not exist and making it exist. Feeling is not really the sentimental “how I feel” but rather every sense possible for a human being. As Langer puts it, “Essentially, then, all the arts create forms to express the life of feeling (the *life of feeling*, not the feelings an artist happens to have); and they do it by the same basic principles.”⁴² Langer goes so far as to caution against concentrating attention one’s “...own feelings under the influence of sounds, [thus] producing *symptoms* of these feelings...a sequence of essentially uncomposed, actual experiences; symptoms are not works.”⁴³ Some may beg to differ that a direct emotion cannot be translated into art. I will admit to enjoying a sorrowful song that clearly developed from a sorrowful experience. However, I would also consent that the most arresting works are not obvious in intention. Art is unique in that “Each art has its primary apparition, which is something created, not something found in the world and used.”⁴⁴ Langer further stresses, “The aim of art is insight...”⁴⁵ And insight is unnecessary when the work’s objective is blatant.

On the subject of musicality, I noticed that many choreographers remain wary of promoting the dance and music relationship too fervently. They made me aware that many factors determine a positive combination of the two. Good movement coupled with good music is not always the solution. For one thing, strong music can sometimes

⁴⁰ Langer, 79.

⁴¹ Langer, 80.

⁴² Langer, 80.

⁴³ Langer, 87.

⁴⁴ Langer, 81.

⁴⁵ Langer, 92.

overpower a dance. For another, delicate music may become no more than a backdrop. Langer also considers the possible problems: "A dance is not necessarily the better for using very good music. Dance normally swallows music...The music that, perhaps first inspires a dance, is none the less cancelled out as art in its own right, and assimilated to the dance..."⁴⁶ Being aware of these problems does not diminish my belief in the powerful music and dance relationship. If anything, those relationships which succeed become all the more satisfying. Parallels between the two arts are "...related to one of the most exciting phenomena in the realm of the arts, which may be termed 'ultimate abstraction,' or 'transcendence.'"⁴⁷

Narratives

Dr. Jeffrey Wilson teaches Philosophy of the Arts, a course I took the past semester, here at Loyola Marymount University. Dr. Wilson is also a musician -- a pianist to be exact. He philosophizes about art, much the way Susanne Langer describes. The issue of how music affects our subconscious and conscious mind is partly a philosophical one. It is not an equation to be solved, rather it is a question to be pondered. I therefore asked Dr. Wilson, what does "transcendence" or "passion" mean to you? He replied:

Passion means being so caught up in an activity that I forget my own petty individual concerns and I almost lose a sense of individuality. Transcendence for me can be either a spiritual thing, being in touch with a being greater than myself, or just a very human thing, of being at a level of consciousness where I feel as if my experience does not have so much to do with my own private likes and dislikes and projects as it does with concerns and pleasures that I share with all human beings by virtue of our common humanity.⁴⁸

The issue regarding our humanity resonates with many of the experts I researched. Witnessing that which makes us human seems to have a lot to do with our emotional response. Dr. Wilson proceeded to give an example of this that he has experienced:

⁴⁶ Langer, 84.

⁴⁷ Langer, 89.

⁴⁸ Jeffrey Wilson. Personal interview. 27 April 2006.

[While] performing some of Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words* at the piano for a group of amateur and professional pianists, and realizing at one point -- when someone rustled their program -- that it felt like the audience was inside of me during the performance, as if my body-consciousness had extended to fill the entire hall and take the audience within it.⁴⁹

Here is an example of the *performer's* experience. How does Dr. Wilson describe what it is that moves him when he is the entertainer? "The sense that I am communicating in a very direct way with the audience and putting them in touch with something universal -- helping them emerge from a private world into something more cosmic." A viewer's response is of course reliant on different factors. The spectator has an entirely different role in the production:

As an audience member, [I am moved] when the performer(s) manage somehow to remove any obstacle between me and the music/dance, so that I experience it immediately. With Esa-Pekka Salonen for example, a conductor for the LA Phil, I feel that he makes the musical structure of a piece so transparent that I cannot help but see it and experience its beauty.⁵⁰

I noticed that Dr. Wilson's description here is hard to grasp in logical terms. One could not really explain what he means by "transparent" in simpler jargon. That is exactly what is intriguing about the arts. They have a different effect on everyone -- there is no right or wrong way to describe the experience -- and that is especially evident throughout my various interviews. My questions force people to search for words to illustrate a feeling that is beyond words. Nevertheless, my interviewees' metaphors are successful enough in conveying their experiences that I can comprehend, to some degree, what the sensation is like for them.

Music in conjunction with dance is decidedly different than music on its own. The relationship allows music to serve a new purpose. For Dr. Wilson, the relationship between music and dance is dependent upon the context:

⁴⁹ Wilson, 27 April 2006.

⁵⁰ Wilson, 27 April 2006.

I think dance has a tremendous power of its own without any musical accompaniment. In some works, there is a seamless unity between the movement and the sound. In others, the movement adds a dimension that I would not have heard in the music without the dance. Maybe the music helps me as an audience member not to see the dancer as an individual human being separate from me but both of us as belonging to a cosmic whole.⁵¹

Since I can no longer think as a non-dancer would, I was interested to see how Dr. Wilson would view the music and dance connection. His perspective turns out to be similar to my own, especially when he reveals that the movement can change how he hears the music. I think that is a key point in understanding how our emotional response occurs. When music and dance are fused, they modify each other and create something unexpected. The result can be startling, and the moment of astonishment generates the potential for something greater. Although I could infer my final question based on the evidence before me, I had to ask Dr. Wilson to recite in his own words why he plays music:

[I play] for several reasons: as a way of finding balance in my life, as a way of 'recovering' from the violence we do to our souls through continuous immersion in logical thought to the expense of imagination and creativity, as a way of 'resetting' my brain, as a way of leaving philosophical work or faculty politics behind at the end of the work day, as a form of meditation, as a non-verbal way of relating to others, and as a form of spiritual connection. [I play] to relax, to allow my unconscious mind time and space to work on problems -- especially when I am trying to write philosophy, as a non-destructive way of expressing so-called negative emotions like anger, as a way of having a full life outside of my paid work. As my work responsibilities have grown over the years, I have found it more and more necessary to develop a rich life for myself outside of LMU. Oh, also as a way of feeling connected to the centuries-long tradition of classical music and the millennia-long tradition of all music-making, and as a form of connection to the other animals, like birds, that express themselves musically.⁵²

As artists, our inner selves know why we do what we do, but hardly ever are we able to express the reason so explicitly. I cannot help but mention that his response continues to

⁵¹ Wilson, 27 April 2006.

⁵² Wilson, 27 April 2006.

resonate with me.

Dr. Barbara Dyer teaches in LMU's music department and is a voice instructor from whom I take singing lessons. During my first semester of college, she knew me as a music major, but as one who had not yet found her niche. As Dr. Dyer says, "Music should free us. For you, music was bringing you to dance." She also claims that music has a physical effect on the body: "All music changes you in some way. Mozart is said to affect the brain, while Rock 'n Roll stimulates the motor systems that make us move." Dr. Dyer's background is in opera, although she now has experience in numerous music genres. She did Undergrad at Wooster in Ohio and earned her Masters at University of Illinois. She then moved to Los Angeles and received her Doctorate from University of Southern California. "I was the first in my family to move away and learn to carry my own vision."⁵³

According to Dr. Dyer, musicians and dancers each have a similar task: "[As a performer], it is important to hear the music and to let it come out of you organically." She believes that, in doing so, artistry is manifested. Dr. Dyer goes on to say, "In the end, it is very satisfying work for singers. With exceptional performances, audiences are transported." Earlier, Copland was quoted giving credence to the notion that some musicians attempt to move their audiences. They strive for that emotional response. Dr. Dyer mirrors Copland's idea when she says, "A performer works on creating an effect." I have learned that an emotional response is possible for the audience as well as for the performer. However, "The effect may not happen to the performer as often as to the audience because for the performer it is work. He or she gets to craft a physical and emotional statement for the sake of making an effect." Amidst working to thrill the audience, performers do still hope to reach an enlightened state of their own. Dr. Dyer refers to this mind state as The Zone. She claims that we are continually striving to reach that elusive place.

I see The Zone as being the equivalent of experiencing transcendence. I asked Dr.

⁵³ Barbara Dyer. Personal Interview. 22 February 2006.

Dyer, what does passion or transcendence mean to you? She replied:

First of all, I don't know about transcendence, but passion to me is finding (if we're speaking of a profession) things you can really get into -- almost as if you were called upon to do a certain thing in life. If you don't take the opportunity to do that thing while you're on earth (and I say this with my tongue firmly planted in my cheek), then you're going to have to come back and do it again. Passion is the thing that you cannot live your life without doing. And if you fail to heed those inner beckonings, then your life will not be as rich internally as it could have been.⁵⁴

At this moment, Dr. Dyer proceeds to give me a handout entitled *Why I Teach Music*. It says:

Not because I expect you to major in music, not because I expect you to study music all your life, not so you can relax and have fun...but so you will be human, so you will recognize beauty, so you will be sensitive, so you will be closer to an Infinite beyond this world, so you will have something to cling to, so you will have more love, more compassion, more gentleness, more good, in short, more life. Of what value will it be to make a prosperous living unless you know how to live.⁵⁵

These words are reminiscent of Dr. Wilson's, regarding why he plays music. Clearly music is more than sound. The art can evoke feeling on many levels; no wonder it is a catalyst in attaining transcendence. Dr. Dyer is realistic that the world does not necessarily nurture the arts: "I have to admit that it has to be balanced. I don't intend to starve for my art. If your art's not paying the bills then it is difficult." She then returns to considering my initial question: "Now transcendence, I'm not even sure I understand what transcendence is." Dr. Dyer takes out the dictionary and muses over its definition:

You know, I guess I always feel like I want to get better at something. I think one of the things about transcendence is that I always wanted more people going with me, and transcending themselves. More than me just transcending everything. I wanted company, and maybe that's what makes a teacher. I want other people to have those experiences, because I have benefited from them. One thing I do disrespect is people who ask others to transcend when they themselves have not really taken control of their art. You can't ask for perfection, you just have to ask for the struggle.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Dyer, 22 March 2006.

⁵⁵ Dyer, 22 March 2006.

⁵⁶ Dyer, 22 March 2006.

I am reminded once again that our humanity is what creates great art. Precision produces a stunning spectacle, but our emotions respond to the imperfect person with whom we can identify.

I wondered next how important the audience response is, or whether the internal emotion is enough, when transcendence happens? Dr. Dyer responded:

The absolute biggest thrill is your own transcendence, when you take control of what you're trying to take control of. You cannot depend on other people to recognize your transcendence while it's happening. When you hit that place in your body and you know it and all those things are coming together, it's a tremendous high. Applause at that point is nice, in fact if people don't recognize it it can bring you down a little, but when you go offstage you know the audience couldn't understand what went on within you. You've still hit 90% of your goals. It happens about twice in a career. That's what they call The Zone. The last part of the goal is to transfer your experience to the audience, but if you're looking for the audience reaction rather than your own response, it's never going to happen.⁵⁷

When performers intend to illicit an audience response, as we previously discussed, their focus shifts away from themselves. To have an experience of their own, they essentially need to forget about forcing a mood upon the audience and instead concentrate on what the piece means for them. Ironically, performers often impact their viewers more when they are not thinking about it. As Dr. Dyer affirms, "You never know who you will influence. And you can't make it happen, you just have to put it out there."

Holly Johnston is part of the LMU dance faculty and graduated from LMU in 1996. Here she teaches two contemporary modern courses, Modern IV and Friday Workshop, as well as Yoga for Dancers. Holly is a choreographer, a teacher, and a dancer by trade. Holly's work is accentuated by dynamic athleticism. As a former member of TONGUE and as the founder of her current company Ledges and Bones (LAB), she has been able to expand upon this innovative modern style. I have taken class from Holly for the past three years and I have always noticed the musical presence in her

⁵⁷ Dyer, 22 March 2006.

work. As a result, I was curious to know how she would describe the music and dance relationship. She contends that “They are essential for one another, even in the absence of music while in silence. Dance is based on the musical structure; it is an evolution of music. It is the physicalization of music.”⁵⁸ I am reminded here of Jennifer Muller, who also referenced the musical structure. In terms of choreography, Holly is not particular on whether the movement or the music comes first. For her it depends on the dance. Either way though, the role of music in her pieces is significant to note:

Music is really important. Physicality is at the core of my work. Music can give emotionality or content to the architecture of choreography or abstractness of movement. Music helps to support imagery. I use music that is evocative, that stimulates -- essentially unusual music. I keep developing; I like unusual sounds, but I keep working toward more sophistication in my musical choices.⁵⁹

Outside of dance, Holly is passionate about music, yet she finds herself unable to separate it from dance completely: “Yes, I love music. I think you need it in order to be a fully realized human being. The only issue is that I am totally obsessed with choreography, so when I listen to music I often become critical about whether I could choreograph to it or not. It becomes harder to just enjoy the music when analyzed in this way.”⁶⁰

In a compelling dance, Holly observes that the music does not distract nor overwhelm the piece. The music complements the dancing. Of the works she has personally choreographed, Holly is especially proud of *Underneath*, a piece performed by LAB. She explains:

It was a deeper, more developed work than usual; it was a full half hour. It involved a more sophisticated movement invention. Luke Rothschild composed the music, which encompassed the classical nature as well as the experimental and industrial [feel] in the last chapter. I enjoyed working with a composer because it was essentially [about] taking an architect of sound and an architect of movement and putting those two worlds together.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Holly Johnston. Personal Interview. 24 February 2006.

⁵⁹ Johnston, 24 February 2006.

⁶⁰ Johnston, 24 February 2006.

⁶¹ Johnston, 24 February 2006.

On a weekly basis, Holly choreographs and uses music in the classroom. She has an accompanist, but she also brings recorded music from home. I asked Holly how she picks the music she uses for class. She answered, "I listened to a ton of music and choose what is just really interesting. It also depends on what will support the phrase. I like music that is energetic or from different parts of the world. We should have a broader scope as human beings." Holly frequently teaches a phrase to one piece of music, and then asks her students to execute the movement again to a piece with a different tempo. Does she notice a change in her body, and the dancers' bodies, when she switches up the music? "Absolutely. Music is vibrational. Dancers are training to be attuned instruments and thus invoke a response to music."⁶² Holly trains her dancers to be musical.

Given that I am ultimately seeking to find the cause behind a transcendent response, I wanted to know what moves Holly as both an audience member and as a performer. She said, "I'm usually moved by the human effort; the superhuman effort. When I witness the eloquence of a beautiful moment. As a performer it's about synchronizing what you intend and what you experience." I like her mention of the superhuman effort, because that is what is so awe-inspiring about dancers. These people show us their human side with their emotions and then they manage to accomplish feats in their bodies that seem anything *but* humanly possible. The juxtaposition between their supposed limitations and their actual capabilities is astounding. Human beings are incredible creatures. As Holly says:

I think I dance because I'm called to be an artist and I love the human drama and I love the achievement of the human spirit. There is no finer experience than welding the human spirit with the imagination of the artist and the infinite possibilities of the physical body. Dance encompasses physical elements and all these things simultaneously. That's why I am drawn to dance over all other artistic forms.⁶³

Patrick Damon Rago, known as Damon, is an Assistant Professor for the LMU

⁶² Johnston, 24 February 2006.

⁶³ Johnston, 24 February 2006.

dance department. As part of the full-time faculty, Damon teaches Modern II, Intro to Choreography, Improvisation, and Laban Movement Analysis. He also manages the university's dance concerts, and directs and performs in his company Palindrome. In my first semester as a dance major, Damon's modern class introduced me to the contemporary style. Regarding our discussion on transcendence and passion, Damon had this to say:

They're different, but through passion you can achieve transcendence. Transcendence is, and I only ever feel it momentarily, when my own sense of self is completely engrossed in what I'm experiencing. Falling in love can be transcendent. There's no one path to transcendence -- there are many. You can have transcendence without passion as well. I say that based on the yogic philosophy that for young dancers it is beneficial to be a dispassionate observer; you see yourself and your skills without attaching your ego to it. In that way you can get to the core of what's going on and say "This is what I lack." It allows you to honestly acknowledge where you are and remove your feelings from it -- just be with the situation. In performance I have witnessed my own physical skill at the highest level of excellence that I have ever achieved. I think the fact that I was removed from my feelings at that point and focused solely on my technique made the skill level possible, and possible to recognize. However, my personal opinion is that attaching passion to transcendence is much more fulfilling.⁶⁴

As an audience member, Damon has had what one might consider a transcendent experience:

One dance in particular that I recall was *[Insert Title Here]*, by [students] Diana Delcambre and Stephanie Jamieson, when performed at ACDF (American College Dance Festival). I really felt this dance developing and the performers connecting to it. On the way to ACDF, our van got a flat tire, we were in a fender bender, and it was just such a long drive up to Sacramento. Then that night they performed. I love all of those dancers anyway, but with knowing the journey it took them to get to that moment, and how hard they'd worked, I was really taken away. When I went to congratulate them afterwards I couldn't even speak. The quality of them performing it was magic. It's neat to experience that as a viewer as opposed to a performer, because you can just sit back and go on the ride and take it in.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Patrick Damon Rago. Personal Interview. 26 April 2006.

⁶⁵ Rago, 26 April 2006.

Previously, Maritain pointed out that it is not perfection we find pleasing so much as the presence of creative intuition. There we see the artists invested in their work. I stated that our reaction to a piece is partly based on appreciating how far the work has come. Damon was especially moved by Diana and Stephanie's piece because he felt connected to the choreographers, the dancers, and the entire process. For a transcendent moment to happen, under any circumstances, "You almost have to release your expectations. If you have expectations, like 'ok I'm going to cry,' then you're just looking for a limit to be met. Without expectations, you open yourself up to the possibility of going beyond what you anticipate."⁶⁶

Damon describes the relationship between music and dance as love/hate: "For me, it's...not a struggle...but a constant search for who's driving, who's telling the story. As a choreographer, the dance needs to be the most important thing. If the music carries more weight than the dance, then the choreographer's not doing their job." Yet the choreographer cannot ignore the music either: "I really dislike wallpaper sound. That's like when the dance is the dance and the music is just random. It can be switched up in the background without affecting the dance. That's too arbitrary for me. There needs to be a relationship, with that relationship weighted toward dance."⁶⁷ Damon goes on to say, "There are so many pieces of music that I have always wanted to use...music is kind of a choreographic jumping off point for me. When I go to create, the music is not on. Movement can't simply reproduce the structure of the sound. The movement must be the innovation, the invention; you can't just take a complex musical structure and mirror it." Essentially, "Having a relationship with music is important to the choreographic craft."⁶⁸

Damon particularly stresses this point during LMU's Student Dance Concert. He wants the choreographers to expand their options: "Especially as students, we don't always pick the music that challenges us the most. That's why we really try to encourage the students here to pick music without lyrics, so that they can't rely on voice fluctuation

⁶⁶ Rago, 26 April 2006.

⁶⁷ Rago, 26 April 2006.

⁶⁸ Rago, 26 April 2006.

or on mimicking what the words say.”⁶⁹ At this point in his career, Damon is allowing himself the freedom to make whatever choreographic choices he wants. Yet, for many years, he dutifully followed the advice he gives to his students:

You get to a point in your career when you can deviate from that education a little bit and do more what you want to do. I picked four pieces of music for a dance I’m working on now that conventional wisdom is telling me not to. But I stick with it because it’s what I want to do. And I feel like I can do what I want now because I finally have a foundation. I’ve followed the rules of my education for so long that I’m sure that on some level I’m naturally making choices which support my education, even when I don’t realize it. Even when I’m not doing what I think I “should” do, because it has become natural. It’s the same as when you get to the time in your technical training when your feet point and your core engages without you having to think about it. I have the choreographic freedom now because of the years spent challenging myself. Students complain when they don’t get to use the music they want to use, but challenging them in their musical choices is important.⁷⁰

We stick to the rules now so that we can enjoy independence later. Muller would probably agree that this approach is beneficial. It helps to form musical dancers. What about those dances where music is not an issue, because they are performed in silence? Damon’s opinion is, “I don’t mind dance without music, but it needs to be done really well. Movement invention, craft, intent, and theme need to be crystal clear.”

As with Holly, I asked Damon whether music is important to him in his life outside dance. He replied, “I listen to music at almost all times. It is meditative for me on many levels. I am very passionate about music, especially female jazz/blues singers.” What then, moves him in a work? His response depicts a complex idea presented very concisely: “Seeing someone living a life on stage, not just doing a dance. A performer that reveals himself or herself as a human being, not a “dance performer.” If you want to know why Damon dances, it will not take him long to explain: “I enjoy it. Can’t really say more than that.”

Cody Gillette joined the LMU dance department this year as the Musical Director.

⁶⁹ Rago, 26 April 2006.

⁷⁰ Rago, 26 April 2006.

Among other duties, he teaches a music for dance course and accompanies the ballet and modern classes. Cody was trained as a classical pianist and began improvising at a young age. He comments on his background by saying, "My parents were going through a divorce, and the reason I mention that is because music and dance have a lot of things in common. One is expression of emotions, obviously, whether it through gestures or music. I truly think that that helped me keep my sanity as a kid." Here is an example of how music can remove us from the world: "Being able to improvise, with the background of all of this melodrama going on in my family, gave me an outlet -- an expressive outlet -- a channeling for my emotions."⁷¹ Although Cody is a musician and not a dancer, he uses his musical experiences to enlighten him on dancers' experiences. Cody draws parallels between the two art forms, such as with composition and choreography:

The thing about composing a thorough written piece [is] taking inspiration from the improvisations, and tightening up the structure -- bringing out the most important parts -- the real juice of it as it were. It'd be like improvising a ten minute choreography of all kinds of stuff and saying, 'well I think I'll save that movement and those movements,' and then paring it down to a three minute piece from those ten minutes of just sort of playing around, which choreographers do all the time.⁷²

Cody attended California Institute of the Arts at age sixteen and left it two and a half years later for San Francisco Conservatory of Music. He initially supported himself playing musical theater and now says, "I learned in my musical theater career to remember that songs are not fixed; they can be variations each time you do them." Maritain also made reference to this fact and concluded that the arts are unique because of it. A music or dance piece is continually intriguing because it is inherently different each time it is performed. Cody agrees that dance soloists, even when performing a classical piece, have the opportunity to give it their own flair. It is open to their interpretation, and you want that in a soloist.

Cody's background helps him analyze the audience's experience in addition to the

⁷¹ Cody Gillette. Personal Interview. 28 February 2006.

⁷² Gillette, 28 February 2006.

dancers' experience. He is constantly drawing conclusions as to how his music affects all those involved:

What I learned in musical theater also was that timing is very important in how you relate to your audience. When u give a concert it's not just like, 'here I am playing the notes,' but you're really, you're reaching out to your audience. I used to feel like, whether playing a piano solo or accompaniment, like we were enveloping our audiences with sound -- not just notes -- but sound and emotion. That feeling as if the sound waves had a life of there own -- whatever the emotions were of the song -- sending that through the music. With my classical technique I learned to pull the tone out of the piano, and not just hit keys. I think it would be like when u dancers are taught to use space and time; you're not just moving from point A to point B, but you're really moving through space. I work for about ten teachers just here alone, and every one of them, in their own way, has you guys doing that. It's very similar to music. One of the things that links all genres of music is phrasing; that isn't just the same as meter. Rhythmic phrasing and melodic phrasing are not only not dependent on meter but they may actually not coincide with meter; they go across bar lines. So I think of breathing when I'm playing a melody on the piano, like for the adagios we do in ballet. I'm thinking of this long long line that hopefully helps to support your movements, rather than just thinking metrically.⁷³

Since Cody is relatively new to accompanying dancers, his discoveries over the past year prove interesting. He is really in the midst of encountering music and dance's relationship. The experimentation process is enlightening because it is about finding what works as opposed to deciphering what *should*.

Cody went to Seattle to pursue a PhD in Psycho Acoustics (he currently has five years left to complete his PhD). Psycho Acoustics is the intersection of the psychology of music, that is the subjective emotions (what do people feel?), and how you can measure and quantify what that effect is on people. The study is not dissimilar from what I am in search of now, although I am chiefly concerned with individual experiences and with the philosophy of why those occur. I do not seek to quantify feelings or to explore the actual science of sound. When Cody finally came to Los Angeles, it was to write film music. He took the job at LMU as a way to put his talents to use, "But now I'm falling in love with the dance world, and I think it's so, it's just so amazing what you dancers do, and

⁷³ Gillette, 28 February 2006.

I'm learning a lot too."⁷⁴ I then had to ask him how he would describe the relationship between music and dance. Cody replied:

I perceive it as a continuum between the two. In other words, not only throughout time, throughout history, and cultures, have music and dance been closely intertwined, but one of the ways I like to see it is that each individual body is a voice with its own unique imprint, or fingerprint, and its own unique gifts to give this world. When dancers work together it's like a choir of voices that could be singing in unison -- singing in different voices and counterpoints. Mostly I see it an expression of a person's life reflected in their art, whether it's music or dance. It's so basic, so quintessential to our being. I have two kids, a son and a daughter, and when you watch your kids grow up you see them just naturally dancing. Nobody taught them to dance, nobody told them to dance, but they just jump around for joy. They're already expressing with their bodies as soon as they're able to stand, move, or even crawl. I think it's just so...music is like a voice, a human voice which came before all instruments. And rhythm, voice and rhythm I think are so deeply connected with our need to dance. On another level, I think it all comes from storytelling, like on a survival basis if you were to study anthropology. An anthropologist would say dance is an extension of our story telling powers. I have studied the evolution of human lyrics, that is why humans have these amazing sound producing capabilities to tell stories, and it was survival oriented. If we couldn't tell a story about [the beast] chasing after us on the hunt we might not have survived. It's part of kind of a human cultural intelligence. Music and dance are communication.⁷⁵

Cody stresses that the relationship between music and dance is much older than we sometimes realize. We can explore the two on a sophisticated level, but the fact is that they were joined long before choreographers and composers began a collaboration. I would venture the idea that we enjoy witnessing a music and dance relationship at its finest because the combination satisfies an innate need within us.

I wanted to know whether it was difficult for Cody to learn how to play for dancers. He responded:

Well I'm still learning and I'll be learning the rest of my life; I would be brain dead if I just said I knew everything. The thing about dance is there are so many genres. The minute I think that I have a feeling for say, a Martha Graham type of movement, I'm asked for a style needing strange percussion noises with a complex harmonic

⁷⁴ Gillette, 28 February 2006.

⁷⁵ Gillette, 28 February 2006.

structures. That's a whole other style of music for dance. So that's a question, what is music for dance? It's so many things; it's as many things as you find in the music world. So yes it's hard, it's hard in the sense that not only are there so many different genres, but each instructor treats that genre differently. They each have a lot to offer. For example, with Karen McDonald, she really depends a lot on improvisation, but on total integrity. You can't let down your energy. As a musician for her classes it can be exhausting, in a good way. Karen would have us improvise like a theatrical melodrama and I would play it like a film score. The same movements then had to be reinterpreted and then she would have her dancers be actors and do something totally different. So I'm switching around from synthesizer, to acoustic piano, to a hundred different percussion sounds -- special effects -- to support what the actors/dancers are doing. It gets really interesting.⁷⁶

I proceeded to ask about the difference between playing for dancers versus playing on his own. Cody replied:

When I improvise on my own, I'm not following external movement, but I am following a kind of movement in my head...I'm feeling musical movement inside my body -- it's just not specifically attached to a dance. With dance I'll be working off of the dancers. It depends on what the teacher needs or what the workshop needs...more often it's a communication between the musician and the dancers -- it's a dialogue. It's not an inner dialogue, like when I'm playing for myself; instead it's a dialogue with the movement taking place and there's a give and take. They inspire me and I inspire them. Sometimes it's a set composition and the dancers are trying to work by choreographing something to a fixed composition.⁷⁷

Holly mentioned that dialogue between the composer and the choreographer as well. Everyone I have spoken to has had an entirely different perspective and a different twist on the relationship, but in the end their experiences are all related.

Cody also spoke to me about his witnessing a dance where music played an important role. When he was younger, he was affected by the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *Carousel*:

One of the famous songs from *Carousel* is "You'll Never Walk Alone." It's a song about having hope, even when you're going through a storm and have such trouble in life and everything. Well the female lead sings this song toward the end because her

⁷⁶ Gillette, 28 February 2006.

⁷⁷ Gillette, 28 February 2006.

husband has died and it's a whole tragic story. While she's singing, there's a dance which takes place. It's such a contrast between these happy people dancing at a carnival and her singing this sad song, at least the way I saw it choreographed, and I thought, 'Wow dance is so effective.' If those dancers weren't there and she was just singing the song, it wouldn't have that overall effect. I think the movement strikes you on a very primal level -- a very basic, deep, instinctual level. And music of course can do that, but when the two are combined it's something else.⁷⁸

Earlier, Solomon noted that Mozart's music defines the mood of his operas at any given moment. Cody has witnessed many a performance where dance and music pull the story along without words. As he says, "Dance put to music can tell a story. You know when they say a picture can tell a thousand words? Well then I guess a dance can tell a million words."

Through my interviews I spoke with a philosopher, a vocalist, a composer, academics, musicians, choreographers, and dancers. After looking at many different perspectives, I notice that all these people support the relationship between dance and music and have found themselves affected by it at one time or another. My evidence suggests that one does not need to be a skilled dancer to be a skilled musician, or an accomplished musician to be an accomplished dancer. However, all my interviewees did share an appreciation for both dance and music while taking part in their respective fields. The dancers were more direct, because they use music as part of the choreographic process. The musicians were more subtle, for they made reference to the internal movement inside their bodies. Most of us have witnessed the talented musician who sways at the piano because his own music is so powerful. Dancers, likewise, can represent an instrument onstage when they are truly musical. The transcendent response with which I am concerned is dependent on artists who can reach these levels. Even when a dance appears to be in silence, or a musical piece appears to be merely a musical piece, there is the potential for musicality and the potential for movement. When the potential becomes a reality, we respond. We respond as an audience and we respond as

⁷⁸ Gillette, 28 February 2006.

performers. The combination of the two brings us into another realm of being.

The Essential Music and Dance Relationship

Dance and music have the potential to benefit one another. The potential is manifest in those choreographers who successfully meld the two. History provides numerous examples of these choreographers. Judith Lynne Hanna reveals, "The music of Gluck, Wagner, Beethoven, and Chopin inspired modern dancer Isadora Duncan's 'soul,' which in turn shaped her body movement."⁷⁹ She also notes that, "The New York City Ballet concerns itself with the choreographer's response to music."⁸⁰ Isadora Duncan and New York City Ballet are two important names in dance. However, one collaboration should prove even more recognizable. Tchaikovsky's famous musical score for the "Nutcracker Ballet" was the result of a music and dance partnership. Tchaikovsky composed the work after receiving instructions from the Maryinsky Theatre's choreographer, Petipa.⁸¹ Music and dance associations have created some of the most memorable artistic pieces that exist. As Hanna says, "...not only does music inspire dance, but dance also stimulates musical composition. Many choreographers continue to create their dances first and then call upon a composer to create the accompanying music."⁸²

There do exist some discrepancies among choreographers about the necessity of music. As I have mentioned briefly, some dances do not use what we would normally consider music to be:

The German dancer Mary Wigman thought that dance could come into being and exist without music. Her feelings motivated dance. Doris Humphrey...was searching for a rhythmic basis other than that of Western music...She turned to the rhythm of nature: the varying rise and fall of water, its energies, and its spatial configurations. Dancers' inhalation and exhalation of breath initiated and developed the rising, sweeping,

⁷⁹ Judith Lynne Hanna, "Is Dance Music? Resemblances and Relationships." *Journal of the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation in Association with the International Music Council*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (1982): 61.

⁸⁰ Hanna, 61.

⁸¹ Hanna, 62.

⁸² Hanna, 62.

soaring, suspending, pitching, sinking movements...Merce Cunningham, sometimes choreographs and performs without music.⁸³

While these methods are with merit, they do not do much to discredit the importance of the music and dance relationship. As Muller pointed out earlier, a dance in silence still possesses the musical structure. The use of breath, for example, is rhythmic and creates sound. Rhythm and sound are each music components.

I began my thesis with the intent to explore the transcendent experience brought on by music and dance. As Hanna states, "Both music and dance are multisensory; they attract attention and evoke physiological responses in performers and observers."⁸⁴ I soon discovered that the exploration would give me insight but not one final and definite answer. I have come to the conclusion that that is the point. As I have discussed, the arts are unique and open to our own interpretation. Even a set dance will be different every time it is performed. Every audience member and every dancer in that piece will also have a different experience. Our aesthetic judgments are personal. A common Kantian philosophy is that, "The sublime...elevates the soul."⁸⁵ Experiencing that which is sublime often results in transcendence. We can therefore infer that art elevates the soul. I am pleased to know that my question will linger in my head, that it is not yet summed up, that every experience I have will bring me no closer to the end. Through questioning the emotional response, I am actually engaging in art, and I never want that engagement to reach its conclusion. In my life, music and dance will never cease, thus my potential for witnessing the sublime will continue. I look forward to my personal transcendent experiences that are yet to come.

⁸³ Hanna, 63.

⁸⁴ Hanna, 64.

⁸⁵ Jeffrey Wilson, "Incommensurable, Supersensible, Sublime." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. LXXV, No. 2 (2001), 221.

What is Dance?

As dance students we are often asked to consider the question which bears the name of this paper. We attempt to do more than describe dance in terms of genres and technical elements. We seek to explain dance in its essence. Over the past four years I have looked at the numerous aspects of dance and thus been continually reminded that the subject is vast. The question “What is Dance?” can be answered on many different levels. It can be approached from many different angles. Given the enormity of the subject, a more specialized question becomes advisable. I therefore turn “What is Dance?” into a specific inquiry of my own; what is the connection between dance and music?

Although my question is considerably smaller than the initial one, it still carries a problematic potential. Every dancer or musician will have a different opinion on dance and music’s connection. Every choreographer uses music in a different way, and some would rather dance in silence than use music at all. Nevertheless, for the sake of focus I have chosen to present my analysis from one particular viewpoint. In *Dance: A Creative Art Experience*, Margaret H’Doubler dedicates one section of her book, the chapter appropriately titled “Dance and Music”, to the complex relationship between these two arts. H’Doubler skillfully portrays each as an independent art, while at the same time reflecting upon what binds them together. She immediately opens with the purpose of the chapter by saying, “A discussion of dance would be incomplete without some reference to music. It is quite possible to dance without music, and dance should be recognized and experienced as an independent art. But because of the...organic relationship...much may be gained from...opening the resources of music to the dancer.”⁸⁶ I would contend that music has the potential to drive dance forward, yet it equally has the ability to restrict movement. I saw evidence of this during Fundamentals of Dance Composition. In groups we choreographed movement which we then performed for the class. Each group

⁸⁶ Margaret N. H’Doubler, *Dance: A Creative Art Experience* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1959), 153.

performed multiple times with different musical options. We observed that the music had the ability to affect the way the dancers moved as well as the way the audience viewed the dance's intention. Recalling this experience makes H'Doubler's statement seem all the more credible. By understanding music's development and its correlation to dance, benefiting from their unique relationship becomes a possibility.

H'Doubler identifies dance as the older of the two arts: "Music is said to have come from dance, from the rhythmic impulses of man, and to have taken from dance its rhythmic form and structure."⁸⁷ According to H'Doubler, man initially discovered the ability of the muscles to satisfy his innate desire for movement. He found that he could express emotion through his external limbs. Not longer after this discovery, man became aware that his internal body could produce its own outlet for emotion:

The agitations of the muscles under strong emotional pressure stimulated the activity of his other natural means of expression. He used his voice; he shouted and yelled and cried. He uttered sounds of joy, sorrow, pain, and fear: the first music. In this stage, music was little more than tone and rhythm. Its rise and fall of pitch, its intensities and accents and tempo, existed as the tonal accompaniment of dance, enhancing and also revealing its emotional expression...As he developed a language, his cries and exclamations became words -- thus music grew into song.⁸⁸

H'Doubler is coming from an anthropological perspective, yet she is not alone in her thinking. Her words resonate with a lecture given by Lady Walquer in our To Dance is Human course. Lady Walquer speaks from the perspective of African tradition. She acknowledges rhythm as part of human life. She stresses that the body is in constant rhythm because the natural functions of the body create rhythm. In modern class especially, we students focus on making our breath audible and using it to guide our torso. The heartbeat also stimulates both movement and sound. Movement and sound leads to dance and music.

According to H'Doubler, once song was identified by the existence of melody or

⁸⁷ H'Doubler, 153.

⁸⁸ H'Doubler, 153.

verse, music became an art in its own right. It broke apart from dance, yet it retained those qualities which joined the two together in the first place. Over the course of its independence, music has seen many changes and perhaps the most vast interpretations art has experienced. The primitive nature of the first sound (breath for example) still finds its place in music today, as does the classical pianist or the hip hop lyricist. H'Doubler remarks, "Although dance is older, how young and neglected it seems when compared with the maturity and expansion of music!"⁸⁹ Her statement here is worth contemplating. Music has been an extremely popular form of expression for hundreds of years. In Philosophy of the Arts this past semester we recognized the prevalence of music throughout history. Many students brought in pieces of music for their final presentations to the class. We analyzed the role of music in determining the mood of certain films. We also reflected upon certain composers whose philosophies were relevant to their art. When taking Music Theory a few years back, my class studied notes and chords and scales and key signatures. There are numerous rules and combinations and the ear must be attuned to recognizing the sounds that determine the key. Learning to play an instrument is only the beginning for a musician. On the other hand, dance is an extremely complex art as well. In Dance History we studied the progression of dance from around the fifteenth century. The various genres and the multiple styles within each genre make for many possibilities. The most distinguished choreographers created dance for social settings as well as to express their political views. After looking at my experiences with the two, I would not say that dance has been neglected. I would however assert that dance is being recognized in new ways, and thus seems like the newer art form. Even in the past few years, dance has gained attention in the media and taken its place beside music in pop culture.

Many people find movement in music, consequently music can be naturally transformed into dance. Even when there are no dancers present and there is no intention of a dance being created, music stirs listeners to hear with their being. Because of this,

⁸⁹ H'Doubler, 154.

“...music is the most important of all the partners of the dance.”⁹⁰ Music can also evoke emotions in a dancer, although those emotions will be different for everyone:

In its purest form, music, like abstract dance, has within its scope only the most generalized emotional situations. It does not depict literally, nor does it require of the listener knowledge of any particular facts. Rather it arouses moods without necessarily arousing associations that impel the mind to make a concrete interpretation. But the listener, if he so desires, may interpret what he hears in concrete imagery.⁹¹

Music creates sensation, and it is this sensation that has the potential to drive dance forward. The subtle aura evident in a piece of music aids dance. In Modern IV we are especially aware of the emotional power of music. Holly Johnston, our instructor, has a substantial range of music in her collection. She plays with different beats and tempos and has us adapt accordingly. We often investigate the adjustments that happen within our bodies when the music is changed. Occasionally we are encouraged to access a particular state of mind, but we are never given an exact emotion or feeling. By refraining from establishing concrete imagery, our dancing remains uninhibited. Under these circumstances, music and dance promote their positive relationship. Time and again we see how intensely the two affect one another.

How exactly does music create sensations? H'Doubler answers this question by saying, “Rhythmic structure alone has the power of exciting strong feeling states, but it is the melodic and harmonic structures that give music its particular power to express emotions reflecting mental states...Of all the arts, perhaps music makes the most direct appeal to the emotions.”⁹² Dance possesses rhythmic structure but not the melodic and harmonic makeup. Here lies further evidence that dance is benefited by its affiliation with music.

H'Doubler has dually noted that “music and dance have rhythm as the basis of

⁹⁰ H'Doubler, 154.

⁹¹ H'Doubler, 154-155.

⁹² H'Doubler, 155.

their movement.”⁹³ As a result of this fact, music expresses more than mere emotions; it expresses action as well. Still, as was the case with emotions, music only hints at these actions. A respectable music or dance piece will not be entirely literal; there will be room left open for interpretation: “Music through tone, and dance through movement, give the feeling tones of ideas, things or events, not the ideas or things or events themselves.”⁹⁴ The audience is encouraged to seek out their own explanations, hence why the arts are considered intellectually stimulating.

Choreographers must not rely too heavily on their music, lest the dancing be drowned out by its counterpart. When music is added to a piece it should not distort the dance’s intention. An element may be added, but the core idea should have been there all along:

When a musical composition is used as the source of inspiration for a dance, its structure will necessarily affect the structure of the dance form related to it. At the same time it arouses associative meanings, and with these come personal and subjective responses. Thus, when music inspires a dance, the result is not an entirely new creation but a reproduction, in a different medium, of something that has existed before. The emotion and the basic form are the same, and both the musical composition and the dance process are creative. The music, carrying a meaning, stimulates to a new creative art. This act is a reinterpretation into the form of another art. Thus a dance inspired by music is like any dance, regardless of the source of its original impulse and structural idea.⁹⁵

H’Doubler continually points out that the motivation for music is similar to the stimulus for dance. The correlation between the two is inevitable. However, problems arise when a choreographer does not utilize music intelligently. The dance should be able to stand on its own:

It is dangerous for dance to follow rules of melody that were never intended for bodily movement, but which may nevertheless give rise to it. If dance is not understood and developed independently of music, it is likely to lean too heavily

⁹³ H’Doubler, 155.

⁹⁴ H’Doubler, 156.

⁹⁵ H’Doubler, 156.

upon music and lose its own vitality. Too great a dependence on music is often due to lack of ability to respond fully to it. A dance should depend upon the dancer's own concepts to impel and control its movements.⁹⁶

Music can induce sentiment, but it should not be followed word for word or note for note. Just as music avoids being too literal in expressing emotion, dance must avoid being too literal in its interpretation of music. As H'Doubler states, "A dance thus related to a musical composition is the interpretation of the dancer's emotional and intellectual responses. It is not limited to the literal translation of note values into activity."⁹⁷ I have learned that a musical piece must be looked at as a whole, rather than broken down into specific lines. The music's overall tone will best be able to determine what emotion can be linked with the piece. When choreographing our pieces in Fundamentals of Dance Composition II, we were often told to avoid "Mickey Mousing" the music. This means that one's movement choices should not follow the lyrics. Even if there are no lyrics, the same precaution applies to an instrumental piece; we are to be aware that slow music does not always translate into slow movement. There is an important distinction to be made between following the music and merely being affected by it. Being affected by music is necessary and appropriate in obtaining a piece's overall mood. After establishing the mood, the ability to create the dance's style will flow more naturally.

To avoid the possible issues presented when combining music and dance, H'Doubler comes up with her own solution. She believes that providing music as a backdrop to dance will resolve the problem:

The ideal use of music would be to have it composed for the dance as an accompaniment, as an accompaniment for a violin or for the voice is composed. As an accompaniment, it should bring about a musical analogy to the meaning of the dance, rhythmically and emotionally. It should contribute to the dance rather than detract by obtruding...The music should merge with the dance so that its presence is felt by an enhanced total effect and not by individual achievement. As an accompaniment, the music is a means of helping the observer to sense the

⁹⁶ H'Doubler, 157.

⁹⁷ H'Doubler, 157.

dancer's thought and feeling, for it is one more sense perception added to the visual and kinesthetic.⁹⁸

H'Doubler is clearly committed to the belief that the connection between music and dance must remain intact. She never once considers that they be separated entirely. Instead she finds a way to bring them together, even after acknowledging an inconsistency in them benefiting one another. H'Doubler's closing remarks reinforce her commitment: "The association between dance and music is close and natural, and it will continue. If rightly understood and used, their relationship is of great mutual benefit."⁹⁹

H'Doubler provides a vivid description of dance and music in relation to one another. She expertly touches on the factors that distinguish one art form from the other, thus giving each one its due credit. H'Doubler also spends a good portion of the chapter appreciating those elements which make the two arts related. The writer is clear in her argument and provides numerous details to back up her perspective.

The criticism I would give to H'Doubler is in regards to her solution. It is here that she declares, "The ideal use of music would be to have it composed for the dance as an accompaniment, as an accompaniment for a violin or for the voice is composed."¹⁰⁰ For one thing, this solution is idealistic. Perhaps that is a reflection of the historical time in which it was written. H'Doubler's book was published in 1959, and much has changed in the dance and music world since then. As Dance History has taught me, at that time the relationship between dance and music was on the verge of a breakthrough. Many choreographers would come along to change the use of music entirely. However, I do not seek here to represent all of these choreographers. I seek only to analyze H'Doubler's words through my own experiences and university education. I have come to conclude that music is not merely created as an accessory to dance. There are certain pieces which work well as an accompaniment, but there are others that are made to stand on their own. It is the duty of the dancer to figure out how to make these latter pieces suit their aims,

⁹⁸ H'Doubler, 157-158.

⁹⁹ H'Doubler, 158.

¹⁰⁰ H'Doubler, 157.

without reducing them to the background. H'Doubler's solution is an insult to the independent art that is music. Based on the rest of the chapter, it is clear that H'Doubler is a supporter of both dance *and* music. However, I would never have guessed this if I had read only her resolution. That statement seems to hint at the superiority of dance. Despite this minor disapproval, I appreciate H'Doubler's account of the relationship between dance and music. In many respects, she shares my opinions on the importance of the two, and she gives voice to a unique way of looking at their artistic development.

Personal Aesthetic Statement

Determining what it is that I value, find beautiful, or establish as fulfilling, is a task I now find manageable. Sophomore year, when I was first asked to determine my personal dance aesthetic in Styles and Forms, the question seemed daunting. I pondered what was unique about me and what defined my style. I wanted my personal artistry to be evident in specific movement phrases. After struggling with the issue for some time, I realized that my aesthetic comes from my being; from my relationship to music, from my past experiences, from my appreciation for the visually pleasing, and from my connection to the raw intensity of emotion. As a graduating senior, focusing on my aesthetic means considering the movement I am awed by, the dancing I enjoy doing, and the emotional element to which I feel connected. I now value the opportunity to articulate my artistic preferences.

Before becoming a dance major here at Loyola Marymount, my appreciation for dance was limited. Ballet had always been my main focus, while modern and jazz I took for only a year or two. I was chiefly concerned with appearance in dance -- how the movement looked. I cared whether an attractive shape was made or whether the dancer's feet had perfect arches. I employed the movement qualities of Press, Dab, Glide, or Float whenever it was time for improvisation. Today I see that the past still affects me. I continue to love ballet and the elegant movers who execute the technique proficiently. However, my dance world now has greatly expanded. My aesthetic has grown to include intense physicality. I am no longer appeased entirely by superficial lines or shapes. I connect to that which is beautiful, but my definition of beauty has grown to include the natural and the eccentric. Movement that is either indulgent or zealous inspires me beyond the exquisiteness of form.

Contemporary modern has provided the greatest impact on me. The first time I witnessed this work was as a freshman, and a music major, during Dance Week. Holly Johnston's Modern IV performed, and after seeing these dancers I was hooked. I loved the risk taking involved, and the sheer athleticism of it. The movement was like nothing I had ever seen before, but perhaps it was not so unusual that I was drawn to it. All my life

I have been a fan of gymnastics, break dancing, and hip hop. My body was always more well suited for ballet, but I was an avid spectator of the other genres. Contemporary modern was like melding two opposing forces together. The acrobatic nature was reminiscent of gymnastics and the sharp accents were similar to those built upon in hip hop. However, this modern also possessed a sensual quality. There was emotion to it. The dancers connected with one another, and there were dynamics present.

Since that moment, contemporary modern has become part of my aesthetic. I am the most comfortable when I do ballet, but I am the most inspired when I execute modern phrases. I have developed fierceness and strength that makes me feel like a more fully capable human being. The physicality element is held intact by the fact that my emotional side is satisfied as well. When I watch contemporary modern, my spirit is elevated. When I dance it, even in class, I have moments which I consider to be transcendent.

My devotion to music is also essential. I see music and dance as inexplicably intertwined. As Robert Ellis Dunn would say, music and dance are “two streams of expression [that] breathe in and out of phase with each other.” Music drives me. I stimulate myself to take on strenuous tasks by listening to music; I am inspired by music. I simply cannot perform in silence the way that I can to music. I crave whatever it is that music instills in me. Although I do not consider myself to be a choreographer, I have had the opportunity to choreograph over the past four years. In each case, the music selection was an integral part of the choreographic process. I choose music which represents emotion in some way, however I am careful not to use anything that is too contrived.

My aesthetic may not be completely definable, for I am still a developing dancer. Nevertheless, these past four years have shaped my life, and my preferences give me great insight as to who I am. I have extended my movement vocabulary to include jazz and modern, but what I have learned in those classes cannot be reduced to technique alone. When I dance, I am motivated by something deeper. If I were not, the work would be meaningless. My personal experiences influence my movement. My aesthetic can best be related back to that desire for the emotionally and physically powerful. When I feel consumed by dance, I know that my aesthetic has been achieved.

Arletta Anderson's Aesthetic

In knowing Arletta Anderson personally, and witnessing her work for the past four years, I almost believed that I could envision her aesthetic on my own. However, after speaking with her on the subject, I discovered that Arletta's artistry ranges far greater than her likes and dislikes and the movement which she executes proficiently. Arletta's aesthetic is connected to her background and to her technical foundation, but it is also reflects her as a being beyond the physical body.

As a young dancer, Arletta studied jazz and ballet at a small studio. Later on, her dance experience grew to include tap, modern, and hip hop. In college, Arletta's dance knowledge has expanded to the point where she can now describe her movement in Laban terms. She is aware that she is partial to contrasting qualities in movement, such as Free Flow and Bound Flow. Free Flow is natural for her, whereas Bound Flow challenges her and keeps her engaged in her work. Arletta enjoys luxuriating in a moment followed by aggressively driving a moment forward.

By working with Patrick Damon Rago and Holly Johnston, Arletta has had the opportunity to explore partnering. She is drawn to the emotional connection present in partner work and now finds partnering to be an important part of her aesthetic. As a viewer, Arletta is struck by the dancers' strength manifested in partnering and by the movement possibilities they create. As a participant, Arletta enjoys building a relationship and developing trust so that they each learn to rely on one another as a support. The trust allows them to accomplish feats which would otherwise be impossible.

Arletta appreciates music that is intertwined with the dance. When it comes to choreography, she often creates movement before incorporating the music. As movement develops, she ensures that it comes from somewhere. She is not primarily interested in the steps. Arletta's choreography is initiated with a physical and emotional purpose.

Arletta continues to explore dance with enthusiasm. She is fascinated by the inner workings of the human body and by the effects of the human spirit. Arletta loves experiencing the extremes to which people can push themselves. Intelligence coupled with perseverance is the formula to which Arletta adheres.

Summary of Dance Studies

Fundamentals of Dance Composition I

- Began exploring foundational choreographic elements and themes, including space, time, and energy
- Practiced performance skills during the showing of studies
- Utilized observation of my peers to offer constructive feedback
- Discovered a sense of community and familiarity among my classmates
- Expanded my vocabulary in regards to verbalizing dance
- Applied new vocabulary to speak and write about observations within my own dancing and the dancing of others
- Investigated the use and role of music within the choreographic process
- Explored working with a partner during the creation of movement invention
- Gained valuable improvisational skills through imagery exercises performed during class

Fundamentals of Dance Composition II

- Continued to cultivate my choreographic abilities
- Gained experience performing solo and with a partner within specific guidelines or with the use of a specific prop
- Explored in groups an unusual piece entitled *Exit* where the dancing consisted of walking across the stage and merely extending an arm over the course of seven minutes. I was able to tap into my emotions and transcend into an almost spiritual level as the audience around me seemed to disappear
- Was introduced to the world of dance outside of Loyola Marymount as we discussed current shows and well known choreographers
- Became more aware of the integral role of music. We performed our studies in silence and then with different pieces of music and saw how the mood changed
- Witnessed the vast range of talent within the dance department
- Our final solos or duets showed evidence of our blossoming aesthetics

Laban Movement Analysis

- Learned the historical background of Rudolph Laban and the development of his theories
- Gained an understanding of the Bartenieff technique and its relationship to Laban and movement
- Witnessed how the inherent progression of movements of a baby are present in every physical action, such as head tilt, body-half, and cross-lateral movements
- Experienced the basic elements of action, body, space, shape and effort for generating and describing movement
- Learned the written symbols for various actions and practiced writing them
- Observed Laban actions in the movements of my classmates

- Distinguished the movement qualities that are natural tendencies within my body
- Explored the concept of Body-Mind Centering as a relationship between the mind and the internal functions of the body
- Found the value in exploring the internal systems of the body as initiators of movement

Dance Styles and Forms

- Became exposed to a diversity of choreography in the community and used it to enhance my own dance composition
- Attended dance talks given by inventive choreographers and viewed excerpts of their work
- Reviewed choreographic aesthetics evident in the 20th century
- Implemented Laban concepts and utilized specific choreographic tools in composing dance studies
- Focused intently on the music and dance relationship
- Created a group site specific study
- Worked diligently on a duet with limited musical choices. Afterwards created a solo with the same musical options
- Set the stage for the development of my personal dance aesthetic

History of Dance Theatre

- Became familiar with numerous dance performances by watching videos -- both original works and recreations
- Assessed the political, social, gendered, sexual, and historical elements of Western dance
- Noted the progression of dance over time, from the centuries' old royal court dances to today's contemporary modern dance, and everything in between
- Studied the lives and contributions of numerous choreographers, including Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, Martha Graham, Petipa, George Balanchine, Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor, and Bill T. Jones, to name a few
- Began asking the questions of why and how dance came to be what it is. Considered the factors leading up to the development of each dance form
- Observed the effects of world dance on Western dance and noticed how ideas carry across continents
- Attended a live concert dance and utilized dance knowledge to critique the performance
- Conducted a video research paper as a final project and presentation. Chose a particular topic and assessed dance in the video in relation to our chosen topic

To Dance Is Human

- Examined the various aspects and practices of the phenomena of dance, rituals, art,

- and entertainment, through reading, film, and guest teachers
- Explored my own familial history and heritage through identifying cultural markers that are a part of our experience
- Understood the value in storytelling, both as the teller of the story and as a listener of others
- Had the opportunity to witness and be active within a variety of different cultural dance philosophies, giving me a wider understanding of and connection with the philosophies and lifestyles of these cultural communities
- Considered the role that dance plays in my life, physically, emotionally, and spiritually
- Investigated what it means “to be human”, particularly through the observation of movement and culture and the relationship between the two
- Became more aware of the innate need for movement and the universality of dance as a means of communion of all of humanity
- Gained a sense of community and comfort with my classmates allowing an open exchange of thoughts and experiences
- Utilized multiple intelligences, including logical, kinesthetic, inter- and intrapersonal, and linguistic methods, to more fully comprehend concepts

Kinesiology I

- Became introduced to the physiology of the body in relation to dance
- Discussed the concept that a dancer must be strong, but that it is a flexible strength, not a hard or tense strength
- Talked about being healthy on a cellular level. Studied the organization of the cell and the anatomy of the cell. The four main regions of the cell being the nucleus, cytoplasm, plasma membrane, and interstitial fluid
- Learned the function of the skeletal system and the composition of bone. I discovered the location of all the bones in my body. Learning that the vertebrae is made up of the cervical spine, the thoracic spine, the lumbar spine, and the sacrum proved especially beneficial in later dance classes
- Analyzed the muscular system and recognized what makes a muscle move. Analyzed movement such as flexion, extension, abduction, adduction, rotation, circumfusion, pronation, and supination
- Gained knowledge of the heart and circulatory system, saw the effects of physical training
- Studied the nervous system, noticed the route of an action potential
- Overall secured an understanding of my body -- what to put into it, how to benefit it, and how to get it to do what I want it to do

Kinesiology II

- Continued the expansion of my anatomical and kinesthetic understanding
- Learned about the respiratory system, the important role of the diaphragm in

- maintaining good health and how the body is supported by proper use of the breath
- Studied the landmarks of the body as a way of finding accurate and stable postural alignment
- Combined physical exercises with lectures to better understand and feel in my own body the ideas being taught
- Closely analyzed the deep, internal construction of the body in order to increase efficiency in movement
- Trained to be more sensitive to the deeply internal actions of the joints, muscles, and bones
- Studied the movement directions and muscular actions of the foot and ankle
- Understood reasons for common injuries of the body and ways in which to decrease and avoid these
- Learned about the movements of the hip joint, such as extension, flexion, abduction, and adduction, and the muscles which take part in the actions
- Gained a compilation of exercises to use to enhance my daily dance practice

Principles of Teaching

- Gathered knowledge of practical teaching theories
- Received experience in leading a dance class, both technical and creative
- Gained a better understanding of my own learning techniques and patterns through self-reflections
- Conducted an interview of a teacher in order to better understand their teaching process and philosophy
- Learned to develop and structure a class, in the form of a one class lesson plan and a unit plan
- Practiced communication skills working with classmates in small teaching circles
- Studied both the national and state standards and frameworks for dance and performing arts and applied them to a three-week unit plan
- Built a resume, cover letter, and teaching statement
- Explored the value in incorporating movement and the arts into every child's educational experience

Ballet

- Furthered the classical technique study by increasing its difficulty and incorporating personal artistry
- Focused intently on proper alignment as the basis of dance
- Familiarized myself with counting exercises to promote the development of musicality
- Utilized flexibility in conjunction with strength
- Developed knowledge to recognize engaged and disengaged muscles
- Made distinctions between muscular control and muscular gripping -- worked to eliminate appearing tense

- Increased my stamina as well as my strength
- Discovered the necessity of transitions to transform ballet from making shapes into creating movement
- Increased vocabulary to the point where the names of the steps and various positions would register recognition
- Engaged in pli  , tendu, jet  , rond de jambe, adagio, frapp  , and grand battement exercises each day at the barre
- Performed port de bras, pirouettes, adagio, petit allegro, and grand allegro in center and across the floor
- Acquired discipline in attire as well as in conduct
- Absorbed corrections to improve skill level
- Discovered balance in terms of opposition in the body. For example, balancing high in pass   requires pushing down into the floor
- Occasionally expanded upon classical ballet to employ elements of contemporary work. We learned one combination that required us to access some Spanish flair

Modern

- Investigated movement off-center
- Learned to use the weight of the pelvis to move the body through various actions
- Used the idea of indirect focus to carry the body into the floor
- Gained muscular upper-body strength
- Received a greater knowledge of spatial awareness and expansion in movements by traveling the body through new pathways
- Practiced dancing to irregular rhythms and not being reliant on an even, familiar tempo
- Discovered how to use force to create dynamics within my dancing
- Explored my own personal artistry and aesthetic through class phrases
- Increased understanding of the head-tail connection
- Challenged my body to move in new, unfamiliar ways through often highly physical terrain
- Examined moving articulately both muscularly and skeletally

Jazz

- Worked to establish a solid technical foundation amidst performing diverse jazz styles
- Increased my ability to pick up choreography at a fast pace
- Broke down complex movement into parts to ensure a correct understanding of how to initiate movement in my body
- Used the entire body as an instrument of expression and emphasized the use of the spine
- Became especially conscious of time and space -- learned how to expand outside my own body all while keeping in time with the beat
- Focused specifically on a couple problem areas each semester and worked to combat

them in every exercise

- Fostered my versatility by being expected to remain consistent with the choreographer's intent. Even if it seemed like a step I had done before, I was asked to look at it in a new way, and to convey not what was habitual, but what the choreographer asked me to convey in that particular moment
- Instilled us with knowledge of the professional dance world. Became familiar with the auditioning procedure as well as the process of acquiring an agent
- Attended weekend workshops with top choreographers and became immersed in the commercial dance world. Studied what would be considered conventional jazz, lyrical jazz, jazz funk, hip hop, and theatrical jazz
- Took part in numerous mock auditions

Friday Workshop

- Began as an introduction into the contemporary modern style of Modern IV. In the following years, used the class as a means to work on advanced modern's concepts in a more basic environment amongst students of differing ability levels
- Worked diligently on creating an understanding of the fundamentals of movement technique
- Gained a greater sense of the bones and muscles in the body. Developed the ability to determine which muscles most efficiently execute certain ideas
- Focused on personal artistry and became aware of the necessity of arms in correlation with the legs
- Acquired the courageous skill of acting instinctually rather than intellectually. Allowed for the body to move functionally as a result
- Increased strength all over and improved the range of joint articulation
- Learned to analyze both myself and my peers throughout every exercise. Created the possibility for rapid improvement by absorbing corrections immediately
- Heightened awareness of time, rhythm, space, music, and breath
- Brought my body into an athletic terrain requiring rigorous physicality and attack
- Conditioned my body with yoga and pilates. Restored my body through massage and unique stretches
- Obtained the ability to learn phrases by merely watching and doing, with minimal questions and minimal explanation. Required me to be more independent and rely on my own muscular intelligence

Music for Dance/Drumming

- Became familiar with the aspects of a musical composition, including meter, harmony, melody, and pitch
- Developed a knowledge of the cultural and social importance of various African songs and dances
- Learned to recognize and write fundamental rhythmic patterns
- More deeply understood the relationship that music has within dance by means of

- exploring musical aspects through natural movements
- Studied and practiced writing basic music notation through listening to all genres
- Learned techniques for playing a variety of different African drums
- Gained a sense of the universal influence of music, by exploring various cultures and the worldwide vocabulary used within musical comprehension
- Observed a shift in the way in which I listen and understand musical selections

Dance of India

- Became familiar with the Hindu religion in association with yoga
- Learned basic foot patterns as well as correct postures
- Developed a vocabulary of words specific to Indian dance, such as: *ardhamandali* (an opening stance in first position plié), *Bharatanatyam* (the specific style of Indian dance we studied), *Chidambaram* (a powerful temple), *Sakti* (feminine power), *nritta* (the purely rhythmic), *abhinaya* (that which is conveyed through gestures and facial expressions)
- Learned approximately fifty different hand gestures, each with a specific title
- Acquired the ability to correlate the head and eyes with our movements
- Became familiar with tying a wrap around ourselves, for that is the costume all females must wear
- Honed our skills so that by the semester's end we were able to perform an Indian dance complete with hand gestures, complex foot patterns, and detailed facial expressions
- Listened to stories passed down and thus became familiar with the Hindu gods
- Personally experienced a greater sense of spirituality while taking part in the sacred art
- Discussed and reflected upon the possibility for enlightenment

Dunham

- Distinguished Dunham first, second, and fifth positions from ballet first, second, and fifth positions
- Learned a series of barre exercises unique to Dunham
- Worked entirely new muscle groups by working diligently from parallel
- Focused intensely on contractions
- Increased flexibility as well as power and height of jumps
- Instilled within us the importance of the reverence -- a good portion of time was left at the end of class for this
- Worked to coordinate arms against opposing head movements
- Read up on the history of Katherine Dunham and became aware of the influence she has had on dance
- Studied drumming as a core component of the Dunham technique
- Discovered an entirely new style within the basic technical elements we already know. We learned to move in entirely new ways, but used skills from other classes

Moving to a City

San Francisco

Transportation

<http://www.sanfrancisco.com/transit/>

- [San Francisco Mass Transit <masstransit.shtml>](#)
BART, Muni buses and underground railways, San Francisco Cable Cars, Caltrain and Amtrak.
- [San Francisco Bay Area Ferries <ferries.shtml>](#)
Ferry services across the San Francisco Bay.
- [San Francisco Commute Alternatives <alternate.shtml>](#)
Carpool, vanpool and bicycle commute information.

Weather

Daily Forecast:

- http://gocalifornia.about.com/cs/sanfrancisco/l/bl_sf_temp.htm

Annual Averages

- <http://www.wordtravels.com/Cities/California/San+Francisco/Climate>

San Francisco	Ja n	Fe b	M ar	A pr	M ay	Ju n	Ju l	A ug	Se p	O ct	N ov	D ec
Rainfall (mm)	111	82	77	34	8	3	0	1	5	25	60	88
Rainfall (inches)	4.4	3.2	3.0	1.3	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	1.0	2.4	3.5
Min Temp (°C)	5	7	8	8	10	11	12	13	13	11	8	6
Max Temp (°C)	13	15	16	18	19	21	22	22	23	21	17	13
Min Temp (°F)	42	45	46	47	50	52	54	55	55	52	47	43
Max Temp (°F)	56	59	61	64	66	70	72	72	74	70	62	56

Housing

Apartments and Rooms

- http://www.sublet.com/apartmentrent/San_Francisco_Housing.html

Housing Classifieds and Want Ads

- <http://www.craigslist.org/sfc/hhh/>

Finé

